



Research and Evaluation Notes

September 2023

To support the public workforce system's research and evaluation efforts, these notes share:

- Select research and evaluation initiatives, reports, and resources relevant to the nation's workforce development system, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, and select populations; and
- Technical assistance (TA) efforts to support positive customer and program outcomes through research, evaluation, and evidence-based program design.

Highlights from this issue:

- An implementation study that identifies and evaluates promising practices used in the Reentry Project (RP) grants;
- An evidence brief that describes an evidence capacity framework that draws on a literature review on building evidence capacity in organizations; and
- An infographic to present barriers and promising strategies for women's entry and retention in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

SELECT READING

Evaluation of Reentry Project Grants

Published in January 2023, the report [Implementing Employment Programs to Support Reentry: Lessons from the 2018 and 2019 Reentry Project Grants](#) identified and evaluated promising practices used in reentry employment programs. This evaluation examined participant- and program-level successes and challenges, the future of reentry programming, and grantee perspectives on sustainability. Some observations shared as successes included shifting the mindsets of participants, connecting participants to education and training, helping participants prepare for and find employment, and reducing recidivism.

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) also released a series of six briefing papers on work-based learning strategies, risk assessments, common indicators of recidivism, participant perspectives, differences among grantees serving adults versus young adults, and grantee perspectives on the RP grants. The briefing papers include: (1) [Participants' Perspectives During Reentry Project Programs](#), (2) [Using Risk/Needs Assessments in Reentry Services](#), (3) [Adult and Young Adult Reentry Project Grants: Differences in Service Offerings and Implementation Challenges](#), (4) [Portrait of the Reentry Project Grantees](#), (5) [Advancing Employment Opportunities for Justice-Involved Individuals through Work-Based Learning: Experiences from Reentry Project Grantees](#), and (6) [Common Indicators of Recidivism Used in Program and Policy Evaluations](#).

EVIDENCE IN ACTION

Evidence Capacity in Organizations: A Literature-Informed Framework

The [Evidence Capacity in Organizations: A Literature-Informed Framework](#), a brief published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation in December 2022, presents a framework based on reviewing evidence capacity in organizations found in the literature. The brief describes five dimensions: (1) evidence culture, (2) evidence infrastructure, (3) engagement, (4) human capital, and (5) leadership. The evidence capacity framework is a durable resource for assessing an organization's evidence capacity over time and a guide to identifying areas for attention and investment. This brief

SPOTLIGHT

New Events:

- [Association For Public Policy Analysis & Management \(APPAM\) Annual Fall Conference - Policy that Matters: Making Public Services Work for All](#), November 9–11, 2023; Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, GA.
- [An Evaluation and Research Hub - Building State Evaluation Capacity Through Peer Learning Cohorts](#). This webinar shared states' experiences from the 2022 Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort and introduced the 2023 application process.

applies not only to federal agency audiences but also state and local agencies, as they can benefit from examining their evaluation capacity and applying such knowledge to their programs, services, policies, regulations, and operational processes. This framework informs not only how to assess the organization's capacity to build and use evidence and identify areas for focused improvement, but also how to contribute evidence as requested by federal agencies. Most components of evidence capacity found in the literature relate to the organizational level rather than the interpersonal and individual level within the organization, suggesting efforts at the organizational level are critical drivers of evidence capacity.

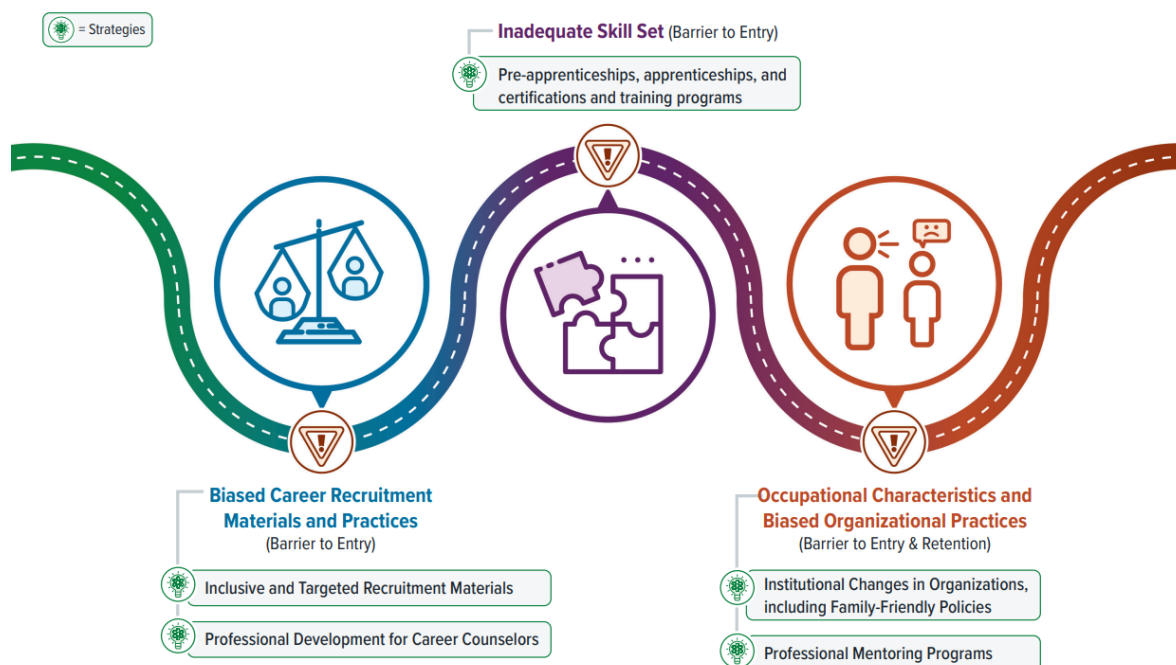
RESEARCH IN LIVING COLOR

Addressing Barriers to Women's Entry and Retention in High-Wage, High-Demand Occupations

The [Addressing Barriers to Women's Entry and Retention in High-Wage, High-Demand Occupations](#) infographic identifies strategies for addressing barriers to entry and retention for women pursuing high-wage, high-demand occupations. Five strategies correspond to the three primary barriers to entry and retention women face (i.e., biased career recruitment materials and practices, inadequate skill sets, and occupational characteristics and biased organizational practices).

This work stems from a literature review report in the [Feasibility Study and Evaluation of Non-Traditional Occupation Demonstrations](#) that provides a high-level review of strategies that address individuals' barriers to entering non-traditional occupations (NTOs) as well as methods for increasing opportunities for employment in NTOs. This report identifies multiple evidence-based strategies and programs that have been tested and proven effective in addressing barriers to entry and retention in employment.

Addressing Barriers to Women's Entry and Retention in High-Wage, High-Demand Occupations



Nanda, N., & Corea, C. (2022, December 12). Addressing barriers to women's entry and retention in high-wage, high-demand occupations." *American Institutes for Research*. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/22-18682-NTO-infographic-v12-lvr-FNL.pdf>

Share research and evaluation questions, suggestions, and resource needs with the Employment and Training Administration's Office of Policy Development and Research at workforcepractices@dol.gov.
Archived [Research and Evaluation Notes](#) are available at the [Evaluation and Research Hub](#) in WorkforceGPS.